

U.S. EMBASSY BAGHDAD
Office of the Spokesman

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MARCH 16, 2013

Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of Halabja Massacre

Today we mark 25 years since the horrific chemical attacks carried out in Halabja by Saddam Hussein's regime in March 1988. More than 5,000 innocent civilians perished in only 20 minutes and another 10,000 were severely injured. Thousands suffered in the wake of the attacks from much higher rates of serious diseases due to the toxic chemicals in the weapons.

Today is a day of mourning for all Iraqis, and especially in the Iraqi Kurdistan Region, as we uphold the memory of the victims of this vicious crime.

The U.S. Mission in Iraq, on behalf of the U.S. Government, extends its heartfelt condolences to the families of all those who suffered; we honor their memory as well as the survivors. We hope the world will learn the lessons of the tragedy of Halabja, and we are working together with the Government of Iraq to promote a brighter future for new generations of Iraqis.

The U.S. Government is working to prevent such atrocities, ensure human rights are respected worldwide, and punish those responsible for crimes against their own people. As we pause to remember the victims of Halabja today, we should also acknowledge the extraordinary progress that has been achieved since that terrible day 25 years ago – progress accomplished through the courage and sacrifice of the people of Iraq and the people of the United States, as well as our international partners. Together, we are working to support an Iraq that is a leader in the region and in the world, where government responds to the will of the people and respects human rights. Most importantly, we work to make another Halabja impossible.

###